

SCHUMER, ARCURI ANNOUNCE MORE THAN \$600,000 FOR WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD IN ONEIDA, HERKIMER AND MADISON COUNTIES

Federal Grant Will be Used to Fund YouthBuild Program for Education and Occupational Training

Friday, June 12, 2009

WASHINGTON, DC - U.S. Senator Charles Schumer (NY-D) and U.S. Rep. Michael Arcuri (NY-24) announced today that the U.S. Department of Labor has awarded a federal grant totaling \$623,959 to the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) servicing Oneida, Herkimer and Madison counties to fund their YouthBuild Program to provide GED and occupational training to young people in the City of Utica.

"Giving disadvantaged youth the chance to help their community and receive an education is a win-win for Utica," **Senator Schumer said**, "I am proud to support a program that increases affordable housing while promoting academic opportunity for a group of people who need it. These types of investments are responsive to the challenges that we face today, and I will continue to fight for these opportunities for Utica and all cities in New York."

"Ensuring that all of the youth in our region have access to the best possible training to prepare them for the working world is critical," **Arcuri said**, "The YouthBuild program will provide our disadvantaged young people with the skills necessary for a great career and success in the future, while providing our region with highly skilled, homegrown talent in areas where we need them most."

"Through partnerships with Oneida County Probation, the Oneida County Re-Entry Task Force, and The Career Link Young Adult Task Force, this project will target youth with an involvement in the justice system who need the character-changing experience YouthBuild can offer" **said Alice J. Savino, Executive Director of the Workforce Investment Board**, "We appreciate Senator Schumer and Congressman Arcuri's support for our project and the support from Oneida County and Utica City officials who helped the WIB develop this application for funding."

YouthBuild assists out-of-school youth in obtaining their diplomas or GEDs while providing occupational training in the construction industry. While acquiring leadership skills and participating in community service, at-risk youth build and renovate affordable housing within their communities. The WIB's project will collaborate with Oneida County Habitat for Humanity to create new housing within the city of Utica.

YouthBuild will focus on these critical skill areas:

Academic Skills. Training in academic skills provides functional learning in reading, writing, and mathematics. GED and remedial instruction will be provided by the region's major provider of GED services through classes customized for older youth that will allow for youth to proceed at an individualized pace and offer life skills. Youth will spend 60% of their time in academics.

Construction Skills: Youth will learn construction skills while building two new houses in the target area, a project overseen by Habitat for Humanity, under the direction of Mohawk Valley Community College through certified instructors. The curriculum is developed to meet the needs of employers and union Apprenticeship programs and provides an employer-accepted credential.

Leadership/ Life Management Skills. Leadership will include lessons from the YouthBuild USA leadership curriculum as well as community-based efforts to support voter registration, participate and show leadership within the project, and conduct service learning on both a project-wide and individual basis. Life skills will help address substance abuse, conflict resolution and other issues that can impact retention in school or at work.

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